Secret		

NSA review completed





Twenty-Third Report

COMMUNIST VIOLATIONS OF THE VIETNAM AND LAOS SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS AND RELATED DEVELOPMENTS

(This report covers the period from 24 July through 30 July 1973)

This memorandum has been prepared jointly by the Central Intelligence Agency and the Department of Defense.

Secret

23

25X1

31 July 1973

DIA Review Completed



31 July 1973

Twenty-Third Report

COMMUNIST VIOLATIONS OF THE VIETNAM AND LAOS SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS AND RELATED DEVELOPMENTS*

(This report covers the period from 24 July through 30 July 1973)

The Key Points

- About 900 new combat replacement troops were detected beginning the infiltration trip south from North Vietnam during the week. Since the 15 June effective date of the "second" ceasefire, a total of about 4,700 North Vietnamese personnel have started the infiltration trip south.
- The pace of North Vietnamese logistic activity continued at low or moderate rainy season levels in all areas except northern South Vietnam, where activity has been high throughout the past several months.
- Combat activity increased slightly during the week in South Vietnam and remained at a low level in Laos.

^{*} This report has been prepared jointly by the Central Intelligence Agency and the Department of Defense.

The Details

NOTE: This is the twenty-third in a series of reports detailing recently received evidence of (I) Communist efforts to infiltrate new manpower and military materiel toward and into South Vietnam, (II) Communist-initiated combat activity in violation of the Vietnam and Laos settlement agreements, and (III) other developments affecting Communist military capabilities in Indochina.

25X1

25X1

I. Infiltration and Redeployments of North Vietnamese Personnel and Military Supplies

A. Personnel Infiltration and Redeployments

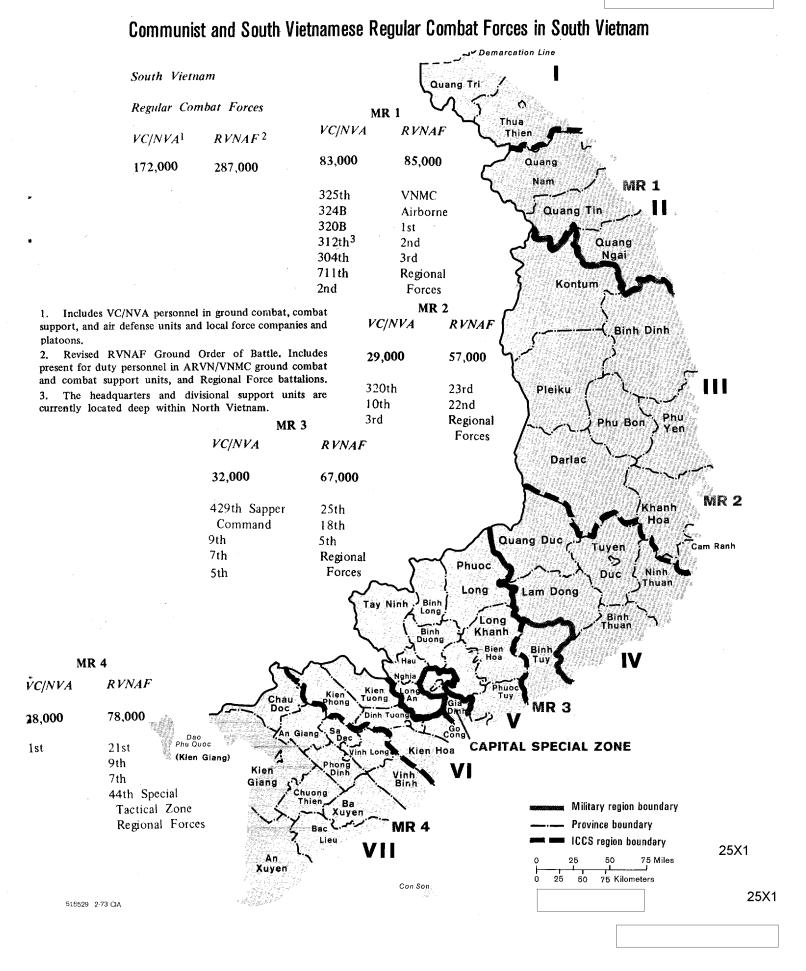
During the reporting period, two new combat infiltration groups were detected in northern South Vietnam. Both of these groups--with a total strength of about 900--are destined for coastal MRs Two special-purpose groups also were de-1 and 2. tected during the past week--one in North Vietnam and one farther south in the infiltration pipeline. In addition, nearly 2,000 southbound persons in a number of undesignated infiltration groups were reported moving in northern South Vietnam during the past week. Both combat troops and specialists apparently are included in this figure. Because the bulk of these personnel are believed to be members of previously-detected groups, however, no augmentation of our infiltration estimate will be made as a result of their detection.

-2-

25X1

- Since the beginning of June, an unusually large number of high-ranking civilian and military specialists have infiltrated South Vietnam and southern Laos. The groups in which these individuals traveled contained a total of about 400 persons. Our evidence does not allow us to determine how many of the 400 are "high level" and how many are lower level assistants or members of a senior official's retinue. Nor does our evidence permit a judgment to be made as to how "high level" these officials are. They could range from field grade military officers performing specialized functions to very high level political officials or general officers. Most of these personnel traveled to the central coast or to the southern half of South Vietnam. Most of them are probably moving into fairly important jobs in the Communists' political apparatus or command structure in South Vietnam.
- 3. Since the 15 June effective date of the "second ceasefire," about 4,700 North Vietnamese personnel now have started the infiltration trip south. Of these, some 4,000 have been combat troops and the remainder have been civilian and military specialists. Since the original ceasefire of 27 January, more than 55,000 North Vietnamese have infiltrated into South Vietnam, southern Laos, and Cambodia. Over 30,000 of these have started their journey south since 27 January, while the other 25,000 were moving southward in the system as of that date. (Annex B, for contains a more detailed discussion of the information pertaining to infiltration that was received during the past week).
- 4. Good evidence indicates that the 203rd VC Regiment has left Angor Wat in northwestern Cambodia. It may be en route to South Vietnam. The regiment apparently withdrew about a month ago from the Angor Wat area where it has operated for the last two years. The regiment, which was replaced by Khmer Communist (KC) units, was later reported moving eastward along Route 6 in Cambodia. The 203rd has been one of three VC/NVA combat regiments known to be targetted against

-3-



Cambodian government forces. It departure from the country would reflect a further disengagement of VC/NVA combat forces as the KC continue to assume the primary fighting role.

B. Movement of Military Equipment and Supplies

North Vietnam

- 5. Logistic activity in southern North Vietnam remained at the same moderate levels observed during the past several weeks. Reports from the Vinh area again reflected a steady movement of supplies, mostly ordnance. On 21 July more than 30 tons of ammunition were identified moving between two storage facilities south of Vinh. The next day, some 40 tons of antiaircraft ammunition were detected moving between the same two units, one of which reportedly had nearly 235 tons of cargo remaining to be shipped. On 23 July, another storage/transshipment point near Vinh shipped some 60 tons of ammunition by train and barge to an unknown destination.
- 6. Fairly brisk resupply movements in the Panhandle between Quang Khe and the DMZ are also still being observed. On 18 July, for example, nearly 60 tons of rocket and mortar ammunition were received south of Quang Khe from a logistic unit operating west of Vinh. On 21 July, some 80 tons of ammunition were detected being transferred on barges in the area, and on 23 July the major logistic entity south of Quang Khe had 103 southbound and 29 northbound vehicles pass through its area.

Laos and Cambodia

7. Although our evidence of N	VA logistic
movements in northern Laos at presen	
the North Vietnamese are still engag	ed in some ac-
tivities in the area. Route 7 and t	he other roads
in the Plaine des Jarres region are	generally in
fair to poor condition and have been	supporting
only light traffic in recent weeks.	

-4-	
	_

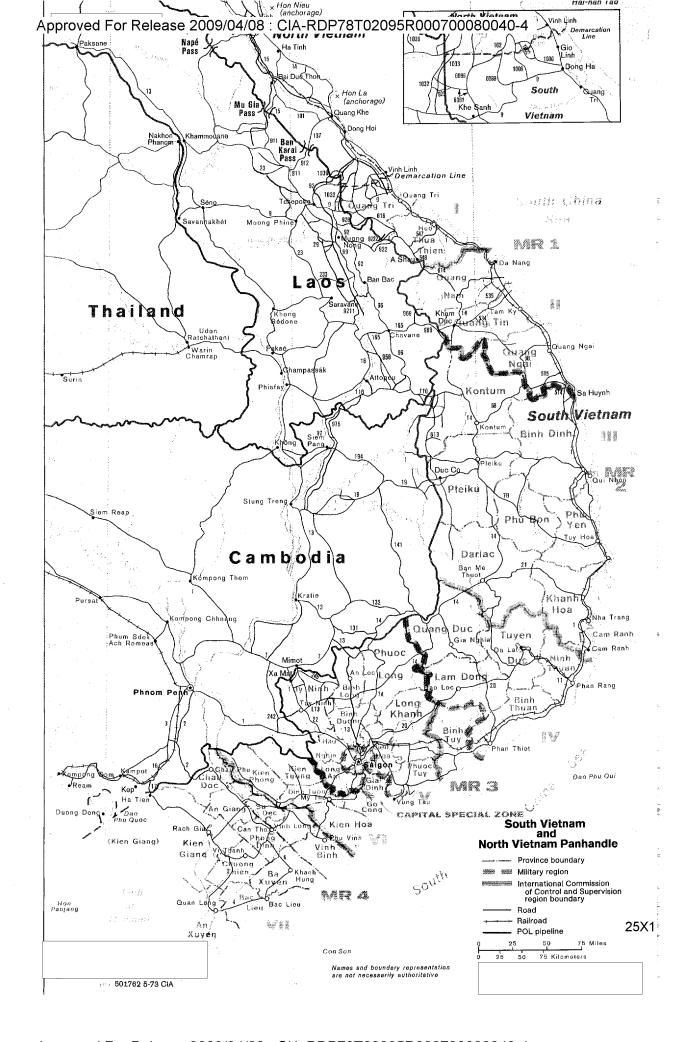
25X1

an NVA support facility was under construction on Route 4 west of Xieng Khouang. The facility will have at least eight buildings and is to be connected with Route 4 by a recently graded access road. On 10 July, 13 antiaircraft weapons which had previously been reported moving west on Route 7 were detected emplaced in the area southwest of Nong Pet.

8. Indications of resupply activity in southern Laos--now in the midst of the rainy season--remain scarce. One NVA unit operating near Saravane reportedly received 25 vehicles carrying equipment during an unspecified recent period. On 21 July, surveillance of the major routes from the Ban Karai Pass into the tri-border area (excluding Route 96/110) showed only some 33 vehicles. A similar report indicated 86 vehicles on the same roads, of which 29 were identified as being on Route 99 north of Ban Bac.

South Vietnam

- 9. North Vietnamese resupply activity in South Vietnam is still heavy, both on the western supply corridor and in northern GVN MR 1. On 22 July, an NVA logistic unit on Route 548 received 14 vehicles transporting over 50 tons of cargo, nearly all of it rice. On the same day, an NVA storage/transshipment facility also located on the western corridor received 148 vehicles carrying unidentified cargo. A subsequent report of 23 July from two other units on Route 548 stated that 71 cargo vehicles had been dispatched for unknown destinations.
- 10. Elsewhere in northern South Vietnam, substantial vehicle movements were observed during the week. On 23 July, 37 cargo vehicles were detected on a feeder route running from Route 9 southwest of Quang Tri City, and there were 10 supply vehicles on Route 9 west of Dong Ha on that day. On 25 July, 45 cargo trucks were detected on Route 9 between the Laos/South Vietnam border and the junction with Route 6088, and on the same day there were 21 cargo



vehicles observed on Route 548 north of A Shau. Additionally, there is still heavy resupply activity in the Cua Viet River area of northeastern Quang Tri Province. An NVA logistic unit there reportedly had 318 cargo vehicles active in its area on 24 July, and 213 vehicles were moving on the following day.

II. Communist-Initiated Combat Activity in South Vietnam and Laos

A. South Vietnam

11. In South Vietnam, the total number of Communist-initiated ceasefire violations reported by the South Vietnamese Armed Forces since 27 January, 15 June, and for the last week (24-30 July) are shown below:

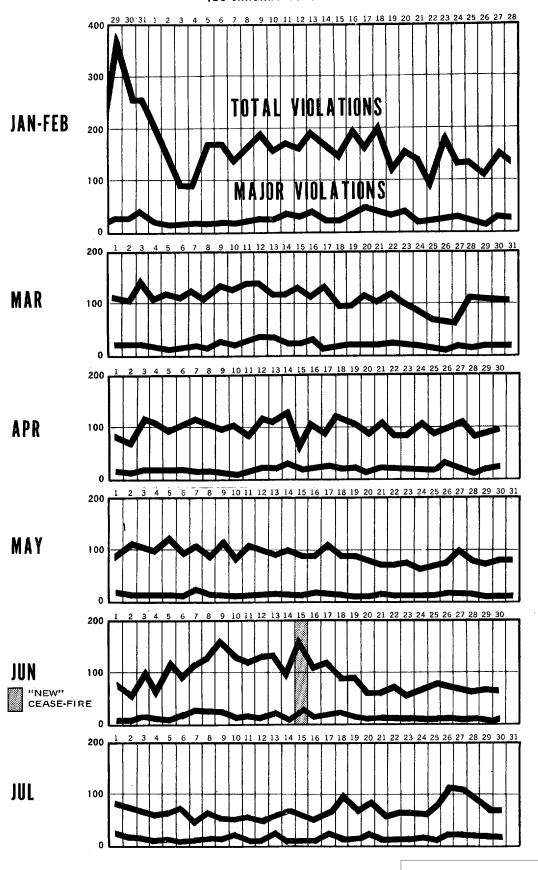
Military Region	Total January	Since 27 "Ceasefire"		Since 15 easefire"	Last (24-30	
	Major	Minor	Major	Minor	Major	Minor
MR 1	1,096	3,718	71	359	11	58
MR 2	353	2,519	89	665	14	122
MR 3	477	3,229	75	653	18	130
MR 4	810	7,510	132	1,344	31	245
Totals	2,736	16,976	367	3,021	74(61)	555 (452) <u>1</u> /

1/ Denotes totals of previous week

12. Some of these violations may have been initiated by GVN forces rather than Communist forces, and it is impossible in all cases to determine the actual instigator. The table above and the chart on the following page, however, do show fairly accurately the trend in the amount of combat that has occurred in South Vietnam since the ceasefire. The fact that a combat incident occurred at a particular time and place is generally reported accurately by

VIETNAM AS REPORTED BY RVNAF

(28 JANUARY 1973 TO THE PRESENT)



the South Vietnamese, even though the question of who started it may not always be treated in objective fashion.

B. Laos

- 13. Combat activity in Laos was at a low level during the week with no significant Communist ceasefire violations reported.
- III. Other Developments Affecting Communist Military Capabilities in Indochina

Expanded SAM Defenses and Airfield Construction Near Khe Sanh

25X1

25X1

The North Vietnamese have completed con-14. struction work on and have occupied a new SA-2 SAM site some five miles north of the Khe Sanh Airfield. also con-Drone photography firmed the continuing occupancy of three other SA-2 sites along Highway 9 south of the airfield. The number of launchers simultaneously photographed, either at fixed sites or in support areas, totalled This gives North Vietnam the capability to upgrade each of the four occupied SA-2 sites to a full six-launcher configuragtion. Photographic coverage of the Khe Sanh airfield continuing improvement of the facility, with some 800 feet of runway extension work underway, 500 feet at one end and 300 feet at the other. When combined with the 4,500 feet already completed and surfaced, the runway would be marginally capable of supporting MIG-21 operations.

Vehicle Command and Control Network Being Established Along Communists' Western Supply Corridor

15. Future cargo movements along the Communists' western supply corridor in northern and central South Vietnam will apparently be controlled by a series of "vehicle command stations" now being established. Communications intercepted from the 41st Engineer

-7-	

Regiment and Binh Tram 42, both operating along the corridor, have indicated that the stations will control traffic and monitor road and ford conditions within a specified area. The stations will reportedly be placed every 6-7 miles and will be connected by landlines and, in some cases, two-watt radios. The 41st Engineer Regiment and Binh Tram 42 apparently have distinct areas of responsibility along the routes of the western corridor, and the command stations will probably be subordinate to these units. The system of command stations appears similar to that which was set up in the Laos Panhandle on Route 99 shortly after the Vietnam ceasefire went into effect.

Results of Aerial Photographic Coverage of North Vietnam

25X1

16. A manned photographic mission was flown to obtain offshore oblique photography of the coastal regions of North Vietnam. Although the mission developed little new evidence of current logistic activity there, it provided excellent corroboration of recent COMINT on logistic movements in North Vietnam. The coverage confirmed moderate vehicle activity at Dong Hoi (at least 58 vehicles waiting at the ferry crossing) and showed four coastal barges and 17 smaller logistic craft off-(Transportation by watercraft between the Dong Hoi transshipment point and Dong Ha in South Vietnam had previously been disclosed in COMINT.) Route 1A, which probably carries most of the southbound traffic through the Panhandle, appeared to be in good condition, although there was no significant traffic on it during the mission. The rail line from Hanoi to Vinh is also serviceable and there were at least 43 pieces of rolling stock observed in the rail yard at Thanh Hoa. The Vinh Rail Yard contained at least 28 pieces of rolling stock.

Communist Rice Collection in South Vietnam's Southern MR 1

17. Recent reporting indicates that since the January ceasefire Communist rear service personnel

-8-		

have collected large quantities of locally grown rice in the coastal areas of Quang Nam, Quang Tin, and Quang Ngai Provinces in South Vietnam's MR-1. According to one report, during the first half of 1973 the Communists obtained more than 1,000 tons of food, mostly rice, from Quang Ngai Province alone. Farther north, elements of the NVA 711th Division along the Quang Nam-Quang Tin border reportedly received 40 percent of their rice supplies from local sources between February and May. Most of the rice is apparently acquired from South Vietnamese traders with access to government-controlled markets, including the large urban markets of Danang and Hoi Farm production by local Communist units, also said to be receiving considerable emphasis, probably accounts for a small share. Besides supporting Communist forces in the coastal lowlands, some rice is probably shipped westward into the highlands to help feed the large number of troops and civilians along the recently established resupply corridor.

18. Communist rice collection efforts in the MR-1 lowlands are apparently increasing. At a 4 July meeting the ruling Viet Cong committee in Quang Nam Province ordered the expansion of supply procurement through agents having access to government areas, with particular emphasis on acquiring rice, cloth, and fuel. Viet Cong purchasers appear to have ample funds and often pay well above the normal market prices.

Communists Continue to Produce Small Ordnance Items in the Delta

25X1

19.

small Communist machine

shops in that area of the delta produced several thousand mines and other explosives and repaired hundreds of individual weapons during the first half of 1973. _______ the workshops are equipped with machinery capable of manufacturing

are equipped with machinery capable of manufacturing explosive devices from unexploded bombs and artillery shells. Despite the increased use by the Communists of modern, heavy weapons in the northern

-9-

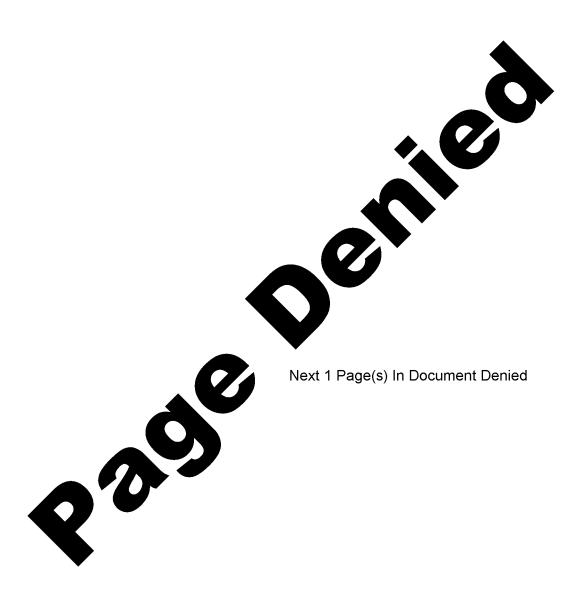
25X1

25X1

25X1 ₋

three-quarters of South Vietnam, Communist activity in the delta has largely involved the use of small arms, booby traps and other explosive devices. General Hung, commander of ARVN's 21st Infantry Division currently operating in the Chuong Thien Province, recently stated that two-thirds of his division's casualties are caused by mines and booby traps.

-10-



ANNEX B

Post-Ceasefire Infiltration of North Vietnamese Personnel to the South

- 1. During the past week, two new combat groups destined for VC MR 5--1063 and 1064--were detected in northern South Vietnam. As a result of their detection and that of previously reported groups 1060 and 1061, the designators of Groups 1042 and 1085 are now believed to be 1062 and 1065. (See the 17 July Ceasefire Violations Report.) We now believe that the North Vietnamese have continued to number groups in the lxxx series sequentially and have not used out-of-sequence designators.
- 2. In addition to these combat groups, two special-purpose groups with an estimated aggregate strength of about 40 persons were noted in North Vietnam and northern South Vietnam during the past week. One of these groups is destined for the northern part of MR 1, while the other is traveling to coastal MR 2.
- During the past several months, Hanoi has infiltrated high-ranking administrative personnel and specialists into South Vietnam and southern Laos at rates significantly higher than normal. June, about 400 civilian and military personnel in 22 groups have been detected transiting the system. The designators of these groups indicate that they all include a number of "high-level" personnel. contrast, only one or two groups with such personnel were observed in any month before the 27 January Some two-thirds of these personnel are ceasefire. traveling to either the coastal regions of MRs 1 and 2 or to the Saigon area. Although no breakout between civilian and military personnel in these groups is possible, these individuals are probably moving into fairly important jobs in the Communists' political apparatus or military command structure in South Vietnam.

-13-		

4. Our estimate of the total number of North Vietnamese personnel who have started south during July now stands at some 3,400, including about 300 specialists. As shown in Table 1, which details the infiltration of combat troops since 1 September 1972, all the combat troops who have infiltrated during July are destined for VC MR 5. Table 2 summarizes the pattern of total starts, including special-purpose personnel since 1 January 1973.

-14-

Table 1

Infiltration Starts: Combat Troops
Leaving North Vietnam for the South,
by Destination*

	1 Sep 1972-30 Jun 1973**	1-31 Jul 1973
Total	94,000	3,100
MR Tri-Thien-Hue	33,000 (CIA), 36,000 (DOD)	0
MR 5	9,000	3,100
B-3 Front	14,000 (CIA), 11,000 (DOD)	0
COSVN	26,000	0
Southern Laos and MR 559	12,000	0

^{*} This table includes only combat infiltration groups, and omits special-purpose groups. There are minor differences between the DOD and the CIA concerning the number of personnel destined for specific areas listed on this table. Where such differences exist both the CIA and the DOD estimates are given.

^{**} For accounting purposes, we arbitrarily define the "infiltration year" as beginning on 1 September, which roughly coincides with the start of the dry season along the Ho Chi Minh Trail in the Laos Panhandle each year.

Table 2

Number of Personnel Entering the Pipeline Since 1 January 1973

Purpose
600
100
250
200
300
325
375
175
125

Including gap-filled groups, except groups 7001-7009 and 5057. Assuming that these groups departed after 1 January, about 5,000 combat troops would be added to the infiltration starts shown above.

	Approved I	For Release 2009/04/08 : CIA-RDP78T02095R000700080040-4
25X1	Secret	

Secret